

MAY 1968 GRAFFITI

In the decor of the spectacle, the eye meets only things and their prices.

Commute, work, commute, sleep . . .

Meanwhile everyone wants to breathe and nobody can and many say, "We will breathe later." And most of them don't die because they are already dead.

Boredom is counterrevolutionary.

We don't want a world where the guarantee of not dying of starvation brings the risk of dying of boredom.

We want to live.

Don't beg for the right to live — take it.

In a society that has abolished every kind of adventure the only adventure that remains is to abolish the society.

The liberation of humanity is all or nothing.

Those who make revolutions half way only dig their own graves.

No replastering, the structure is rotten.

Masochism today takes the form of reformism.

Reform my ass.

The revolution is incredible because it's really happening.

I came, I saw, I was won over.

Run, comrade, the old world is behind you!

Quick!

If we only have enough time . . .

In any case, no regrets!

Already ten days of happiness.

Live in the moment.

Comrades, if everyone did like us . . .

We will ask nothing. We will demand nothing. We will take, occupy.

Down with the state.

When the National Assembly becomes a bourgeois theater, all the bourgeois theaters should be turned into national assemblies.*

[*Written above the entrance of the occupied Odéon Theater]

Referendum: whether we vote yes or no, it turns us into suckers.

It's painful to submit to our bosses;
it's even more stupid to choose them.

Let's not change bosses, let's change life.

Don't liberate me — I'll take care of that.

I'm not a servant of the people (much less of their self-appointed leaders). Let the people serve themselves.

Abolish class society.

Nature created neither servants nor masters.

I want neither to rule nor to be ruled.

We will have good masters as soon as everyone is their own.

"In revolution there are two types of people:
those who make it and those who profit from it."
(Napoleon)

Warning: ambitious careerists may now be disguised as "progressives."

Don't be taken in by the politicians and their filthy demagoguery.

We must rely on ourselves.

Socialism without freedom is a barracks.

All power corrupts. Absolute power corrupts absolutely.

We want structures that serve people, not people serving structures.

The revolution doesn't belong to the committees, it's yours.

Politics is in the streets.

Barricades close the streets but open the way.

Our hope can come only from the hopeless.

A proletarian is someone who has no power over his life and knows it.

Never work.

People who work get bored when they don't work.

People who don't work never get bored.

Workers of all countries, enjoy!

Since 1936 I have fought for wage increases.

My father before me fought for wage increases.

Now I have a TV, a fridge, a Volkswagen.

Yet my whole life has been a drag.

Don't negotiate with the bosses. Abolish them.

The boss needs you, you don't need the boss.

By stopping our machines together we will demonstrate their weakness.

Occupy the factories.

Power to the workers councils.

(an enraged)

Power to the enraged councils.

(a worker)

Worker: You may be only 25 years old,
but your union dates from the last century.

Labor unions are whorehouses.

Comrades, let's lynch Séguy!*

[*Georges Séguy, head bureaucrat of the Communist Party-dominated labor union]

Please leave the Communist Party as clean on leaving
it as you would like to find it on entering.

Stalinists, your children are with us!

Man is neither Rousseau's noble savage nor
the Church's or La Rochefoucauld's depraved sinner.
He is violent when oppressed, gentle when free.

Conflict is the origin of everything.
(Heraclitus)

If we have to resort to force, don't sit on the fence.

Be cruel.

Humanity won't be happy till the last capitalist is hung
with the guts of the last bureaucrat.

When the last sociologist has been hung with the guts of
the last bureaucrat, will we still have "problems"?

The passion of destruction is a creative joy.
(Bakunin)

A single nonrevolutionary weekend is infinitely more
bloody than a month of total revolution.

The tears of philistines are the nectar of the gods.

This concerns everyone.

We are all German Jews.

We refuse to be highrised, diplomaed, licensed,
inventoried, registered, indoctrinated, suburbanized,
sermonized, beaten, telemanipulated, gassed, booked.

We are all "undesirables."

We must remain "unadapted."

The forest precedes man, the desert follows him.

Under the paving stones, the beach.

Concrete breeds apathy.

Coming soon to this location: charming ruins.

Beautiful, maybe not, but O how charming: life versus survival.

"My aim is to agitate and disturb people.
I'm not selling bread, I'm selling yeast."
(Unamuno)

Conservatism is a synonym for rottenness and ugliness.

You are hollow.

You will end up dying of comfort.

Hide yourself, object!

No to coat-and-tie revolution.

A revolution that requires us to sacrifice
ourselves for it is Papa's revolution.

Revolution ceases to be the moment it calls for self-sacrifice.

The prospect of finding pleasure tomorrow will
never compensate for today's boredom.

When people notice they are bored, they stop being bored.

Happiness is a new idea.

Live without dead time.

Those who talk about revolution and class struggle without referring
to everyday reality have a corpse in their mouth.

Culture is an inversion of life.

Poetry is in the streets.

The most beautiful sculpture is a paving stone thrown at a cop's head.

Art is dead, don't consume its corpse.

Art is dead, let's liberate our everyday life.

Art is dead, Godard can't change that.

Godard: the supreme Swiss Maoist jerk.

Permanent cultural vibration.

We want a wild and ephemeral music.

We propose a fundamental regeneration:

concert strikes,

sound gatherings with collective investigation.

Abolish copyrights: sound structures belong to everyone.

Anarchy is me.

Revolution, I love you.

Down with the abstract, long live the ephemeral.

(Marxist-Pessimist Youth)

Don't consume Marx, live him.

I'm a Groucho Marxist.

I take my desires for reality because I believe
in the reality of my desires.

Desiring reality is great! Realizing your desires is even better!

Practice wishful thinking.

I declare a permanent state of happiness.

Be realistic, demand the impossible.

Power to the imagination.

Those who lack imagination cannot imagine what is lacking.

Imagination is not a gift, it must be conquered.

(Breton)

Action must not be a reaction, but a creation.

Action enables us to overcome divisions and find solutions.

Exaggeration is the beginning of invention.

The enemy of movement is skepticism. Everything that has been realized comes from dynamism, which comes from spontaneity.

Here, we spontane.

"You must bear a chaos in yourself in order to bring a dancing star into the world."

(Nietzsche)

Chance must be systematically explored.

Alcohol kills. Take LSD.

Unbutton your mind as often as your fly.

"Every view of things that is not strange is false."

(Valéry)

Life is elsewhere.

Forget everything you've been taught. Start by dreaming.

Form dream committees.

Dare! This word contains all the politics of the present moment. (Saint-Just)

Arise, ye wretched of the university.

Students are jerks.

The student's susceptibility to recruitment as a militant for any cause is a sufficient demonstration of his real impotence.

(enragé women)

Professors, you make us grow old.

Terminate the university.

Rape your Alma Mater.

What if we burned the Sorbonne?

Professors, you are as senile as your culture, your modernism is nothing but the modernization of the police.

We refuse the role assigned to us: we will not be trained as police dogs.

We don't want to be the watchdogs or servants of capitalism.

Exams = servility, social promotion, hierarchical society.

When examined, answer with questions.

Insolence is the new revolutionary weapon.

Every teacher is taught, everyone taught teaches.

The Old Mole of history seems to be splendidly
undermining the Sorbonne.

(telegram from Marx, 13 May 1968)

Thought that stagnates rots.

To call in question the society you "live" in, you must first
be capable of calling yourself in question.

Take revolution seriously, but don't take yourself seriously.

The walls have ears. Your ears have walls.

Making revolution also means breaking our internal chains.

A cop sleeps inside each one of us. We must kill him.

Drive the cop out of your head.

Religion is the ultimate con.

Neither God nor master.

If God existed it would be necessary to abolish him.

Can you believe that some people are still Christians?

Down with the toad of Nazareth.

How can you think freely in the shadow of a chapel?

We want a place to piss, not a place to pray.

I suspect God of being a leftist intellectual.

The bourgeoisie has no other pleasure than to degrade all pleasures.

Going through the motions kills the emotions.

Struggle against the emotional fixations that paralyze our potentials.
(Committee of Women on the Path of Liberation)

Constraints imposed on pleasure incite the
pleasure of living without constraints.

The more I make love, the more I want to make revolution.

The more I make revolution, the more I want to make love.

SEX: It's okay, says Mao, as long as you don't do it too often.

Comrades, 5 hours of sleep a day is indispensable:
we need you for the revolution.

Embrace your love without dropping your guard.

I love you!!! Oh, say it with paving stones!!!

I'm coming in the paving stones.

Total orgasm.

Comrades, people are making love in the Poli Sci classrooms, not only in the fields.

Revolutionary women are more beautiful.

Zelda, I love you! Down with work!

The young make love, the old make obscene gestures.

Make love, not war.

Love one another.

Whoever speaks of love destroys love.

Down with consumer society.

The more you consume, the less you live.

Commodities are the opium of the people.

Burn commodities.

You can't buy happiness. Steal it.

See Nanterre and live. Die in Naples with Club Med.

Are you a consumer or a participant?

To be free in 1968 means to participate.

I participate.

You participate.

He participates.

We participate.

They profit.

The golden age was the age when gold didn't reign.

"The cause of all wars, riots and injustices is the existence of property."
(St. Augustine)

Happiness is hanging your landlord.

Millionaires of the world unite. The wind is turning.

The economy is wounded — I hope it dies!

How sad to love money.

You too can steal.

"Amnesty: An act in which the rulers
pardon the injustices they have committed."
(Ambrose Bierce)*

[*The definition in Bierce's *Devil's Dictionary* is actually: "Amnesty: The state's magnanimity to those offenders whom it would be too expensive to punish."]

Abolish alienation.

Obedience begins with consciousness;
consciousness begins with disobedience.

First, disobey; then write on the walls.
(Law of 10 May 1968)

I don't like to write on walls.

Write everywhere.

Before writing, learn to think.

I don't know how to write but I would like to say
beautiful things and I don't know how.

I don't have time to write!!!

I have something to say but I don't know what.

Freedom is the right to silence.

Long live communication, down with telecommunication.

You, my comrade, you who I was unaware of amid the tumult, you who
are throttled, afraid, suffocated — come, talk to us.

Talk to your neighbors.

Yell.

Create.

Look in front of you!!!

Help with cleanup, there are no maids here.

Revolution is an INITIATIVE.

Speechmaking is counterrevolutionary.

Comrades, stop applauding, the spectacle is everywhere.

Don't get caught up in the spectacle of opposition. Oppose the spectacle.

Down with spectacle-commodity society.

Down with journalists and those who cater to them.

Only the truth is revolutionary.

No forbidding allowed.

Freedom is the crime that contains all crimes. It is our ultimate weapon.

The freedom of others extends mine infinitely.

No freedom for the enemies of freedom.

Free our comrades.

Open the gates of the asylums, prisons and other faculties.

Open the windows of your heart.

To hell with boundaries.

You can no longer sleep quietly once you've suddenly opened your eyes.

The future will only contain what we put into it now.

These graffiti are drawn primarily from Julien Besançon's *Les murs ont la parole* (Tchou, 1968), Walter Lewino's *L'imagination au pouvoir* (Losfeld, 1968), Marc Rohan's *Paris '68* (Impact, 1968), René Viénet's *Enragés et situationnistes dans le mouvement des occupations* (Gallimard, 1968), and Gérard Lambert's *Mai 1968: brûlante nostalgie* (Pied de nez, 1988).

Translated by Ken Knabb, March 1999.

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[[May 1968 Documents](#)]

[[The Beginning of an Era](#) (Situationist analysis of May 1968)]

[[The Joy of Revolution](#) (passages on May 1968)]

[[Original French texts of these graffiti](#)]

